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Grp./A.U.: 3671

Claim Amendments

Claims 1-56 (canceled)

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Claim 57 (previously presented):

A picking rake for collecting yard debris comprising:

a first and second rake units; and

the first rake unit having a first rake head, and a first rake handle coupled to the first rake head; and

the second rake unit having a second rake head, and a second rake handle coupled to the second rake head; and

each of the first and second rake heads having an external side and an inner side; and

each of the first and second rake heads having a lower end and an upper end, wherein the lower ends of the first and second rake heads have a plurality of prongs forming a first plane; and

a first grip handle attached to the first rake handle, and a second grip handle attached to the second rake handle, wherein each of the first and second grip handles form a second plane substantially parallel to the first plane, wherein the first and second grip handles and the first and second rake heads are facing toward each other when the picking rake is used for picking up debris; and


wherein the first grip handle has a first portion and the second grip handle has a second portion, and one of the first and second portions has a first connecting means for holding the right and left rake units in a side by side relationship along their inner sides when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris; and

each of the first and second rake handles having lower and upper ends, wherein the lower ends are removably connected to the respective upper ends of the first and

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second rake heads, and wherein one of the upper ends of the first and second rake handles has an aperture through which a second connecting means is extended for flexibly and pivotally holding and connecting the first and second rake handles; and

wherein at least one of the first and second grip handles are located at a midsection of at least one of the first and second rake handles, and the first and second grip handles are located substantially remote from the upper ends of the first and second rake heads.

 **Claim 58** (previously presented): The picking rake for collecting yard debris of claim 57, wherein the first and second rake heads have a third connecting means for holding the first and second rake heads in a side by side relationship when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris.

Claim 59 (previously presented): The picking rake for collecting yard debris of claim 57, wherein the first connecting means have an attaching means being secured to one of the first and second grip portions.

Claim 60 (previously presented): The picking rake for collecting yard debris of claim 57, wherein the first connecting means of one of the first and second grip portions resiliently snaps onto and hold the other one of the first and second grip portions when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris.

Claim 61 (previously presented): The picking rake for collecting yard debris of claim 57, wherein one of the first and second rake handles comprises at least two telescoping tubes whereby the telescoping tubes can be extended when gathering debris and retracted when picking debris.

Claim 62(previously presented as new with RCE) and (probably not yet entered) and (currently amended):

A picking rake for collecting yard debris comprising:

a first and second rake units; and

the first rake unit having a first rake head and
a first rake handle coupled to the first rake head; and

the second rake unit having a second rake head and a second rake handle coupled
to the second rake head; and

wherein each of the first and second rake heads have an external side and an inner
side; and

wherein each of the first and second rake heads have a lower end and an upper
end, wherein the lower ends of the first and second rake heads have a plurality of prongs;
and

connecting means on at least one of the rake units for joining the two rake units
towards the inner sides of the rake heads, the handles substantially parallel and next to
each other, the lower ends of the rake heads aligned forming substantially one functional
rake head, each at least one rake head contributing to the total raking span; and

wherein both rake heads substantially lie on a first infinite plane; and

wherein the first rake handle comprises a first elongated member and a first hand
grip and the second rake handle comprises a second elongated member and a second hand
grip; and

wherein the first and second elongated members each has a lower end and an
upper end; and

wherein the lower ends of the first and second elongated members are coupled to
the upper ends of their respective rake heads; and

wherein the first and second hand grips each comprise a branch extending
substantially transversely from their respective elongated members at a section
intermediate the upper ends of their respective rake heads and the upper ends of their
respective elongated members; and

~~wherein each of the first and second hand grips lie on a second infinite plane; and~~
~~wherein the first and second infinite planes each contain a common intersecting~~
~~line; and~~

wherein the first and second hand grips and the first and second rake heads are
facing toward each other when the picking rake is used for picking up debris.

Claim 63(previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 62 further including abutment means to abut the two rake units together.

Claim 64(previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

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The picking rake in claim 62 wherein the first hand grip has a first portion and the second hand grip has a second portion, said first and second portions substantially adjacent each other when the rake units are brought next to each other prior to being connected; and wherein said connecting means comprise a first connecting means on one of the first and second portions comprising a resilient member that snaps onto and holds the other one of the first and second portions when the picking rake is used for picking yard debris.

Claim 65 (previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 63 wherein the abutment means comprise a recessed portion disposed on a section of one of the rake handles, the recessed portion sized to snugly receive the inner and outer dimensions of said connecting means.

Claim 66(previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 64 further including:

- a) a first aperture on the resilient member,
- b) a second aperture on the other one of the first and second portions,
- c) a snap button disposed inside the other one of the first and second portions, the snap button having a button head, the button head outwardly engaged in the second aperture,
- d) wherein the resilient member snaps onto and holds the other one of the first and second portions. the button head further engaging outwardly into the first aperture when the rake units are joined together for raking debris.

Claim 67(previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 63 wherein the inner side of at least one of the first and second rake heads overlap the inner side of the other rake head and functions as an abutment means.

Claim 68(previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 62 wherein the connecting means comprise an aperture or equivalent disposed on the upper ends of one of the first and second rake handles through which a second connecting means is extended for flexibly and pivotally holding and joining the first and second rake handles.

Claim 69(previously presented as new with RCE) and (probably not yet entered) and (currently amended):

The picking rake in claim 62 wherein each of the hand grips extend from their respective elongated members proximally at an angle greater than acute; and further including a first arm leverage on the first rake unit and a second arm leverage on the second rake unit; and

wherein each of the first and second arm leverages comprise a branch extending substantially transversely from their respective elongated members forming a structure ~~with an opening for loosely~~ of size capable of receiving a forearm of a user; user from a direction substantially lateral to the line of the forearm; and

~~wherein each of the first and second arm leverages comprise at least a forearm support member that also lies on a third and fourth infinite planes respectively, said third and fourth infinite planes substantially parallel to each other and substantially normal to the first and second infinite planes; and~~

wherein the first and second arm leverages are located intermediate their respective first and second hand grips and the upper ends of their respective elongated members; and

wherein the first and second arm leverages are facing toward each other when the picking rake is used for picking up debris.

Claim 70 (previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 69 wherein at least one of the first and second hand grips has a first portion and the other one of the first and second hand grips has a second portion, said first and second portions substantially adjacent each other when the rake handles are brought next to each other prior to being connected; and

wherein one of the first and second portions contain a first connecting means that resiliently snaps onto and holds the other one of the first and second portions when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris.

Claim 71 (previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 69 wherein at least one of the first and second arm leverages has a first portion and the other one of the first and second arm leverages has a second portion, said first and second portions substantially adjacent each other when the rake handles are brought next to each other prior to being connected; and

wherein one of the first and second portions contain a first connecting means that resiliently snaps onto and holds the other one of the first and second portions when the picking rake is used for raking yard debris.

Claim 72 (previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered): The picking rake in claim 69 wherein the terminals of the first and second hand grips further includes extensions connecting to their respective first and second arm leverages.

Claim 73 (previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 62 wherein the first and second elongated members are lying on the first infinite plane; and wherein said connecting means comprise a third connecting means on one of the elongated members of the rake handles, wherein the third connecting means resiliently snaps onto and holds the other elongated member when the rake units are joined together for raking debris.

Claim 74(previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 62 wherein said connecting means comprise:

- a) a resilient member disposed on the elongated member of one of the rake handles, said resilient member having a first aperture, and
- b) a second aperture disposed inside the elongated member of the other rake handle, and
- c) a snap button disposed inside the elongated member of the other rake handle, said snap button having a button head, said button head outwardly engaged in the second aperture,
- d) wherein the resilient member snaps and holds the elongated member of the other rake handle, the button head further engaging outwardly into the first aperture when the two rake units are joined for raking debris.

Claim 75(previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 62 wherein said connecting means comprise:

- a) a tube disposed on the elongated member of one of the rake handles, said tube having a first aperture,
- b) a second aperture disposed on the elongated member of the other rake handle,
- c) a snap button disposed inside the elongated member of the other rake handle, said snap button having a button head outwardly engaged into the second aperture, and
- d) wherein the tube snugly receives the elongated portion of the other rake handle when the other rake handle is inserted into the tube, the button head further engaging outwardly into the first aperture when the rake units are joined for raking debris.

Claim 76 (previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 62 further including:

- a) at least one third elongated member dimensionally receivable inside one of the first and second elongated members, and
- b) cooperating retaining means on the third member and on one of the first and second elongated members for telescoping the third elongated member in and out of one of the first and second elongated members,

whereby the third elongated member is extended when raking and retracted when picking.

Claim 77(previously presented as new with RCE) and (probably not yet entered) and (currently amended):

A handle for picking yard debris comprising:

a first elongated member having a lower end and an upper end; and
wherein the lower end of the elongated member can be coupled to a holding head;

and

wherein the holding head and the elongated member lie substantially on a first infinite plane; and

12/ a hand grip comprising a branch extending substantially transversely proximally from the elongated member at an angle greater than acute and located intermediate the upper end of the holding head and the upper end of the elongated member; and

wherein the hand grip lies on a second infinite plane; and

wherein the first and second infinite planes each contain a common intersecting line; and

a rigid arm leverage comprising a branch extending substantially transversely from the elongated member forming a structure ~~with an opening for loosely of size~~ capable of receiving the forearm of a user; user from a direction substantially lateral to the line of the forearm; and

~~wherein the branch includes at least a forearm support member that also lies on a third infinite plane substantially normal to the first and second infinite planes; and~~

wherein the arm leverage is located intermediate the hand grip and the upper end of the elongated member; and

whereby the hand grip and the arm leverage together comprise an effective holding and arm leveraging means; and

whereby a pair of handles adapted for the left and right hands of a user provides a very effective means of picking yard debris.

Claim 78 (previously presented with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The handle in claim 77 wherein the exposed terminal of the hand grip is further extended to meet the arm leverage.

Claim 79(previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The handle in claim 77 further including:

- a) at least one second elongated member dimensionally receivable inside the first elongated member, and
- b) cooperating retaining means on the first and second elongated members for telescoping the second elongated member in and out of the first elongated member, and

whereby the second elongated member is extended for gathering and retracted for picking.

Claim 80 (previously presented as new with RCE, probably not yet entered):

The picking rake in claim 57 further including telescoping means on one of the rake handles comprising:

- a) at least one elongated member dimensionally receivable inside one of the first and second rake handles, and
- b) cooperating retaining means on the elongated member and on one of the first and second rake handles for telescoping the elongated member in and out of one of the first and second rake handles, and

whereby the elongated member is extended for raking and retracted for picking.

Claim 81 (new): A picking rake for collecting yard debris comprising:

- a first and second rake units; and
- the first rake unit having a first rake head and a first rake handle; and
- the second rake unit having a second rake head and a second rake handle; and

wherein each of the first and second rake heads have a first and second external side and a first and second inner side respectively; and

wherein each of the first and second rake heads have a lower end and an upper end; and

wherein the lower ends of the rake heads each has a plurality of prongs; and

wherein each rake handle comprise an elongated member having a lower end and an upper end; and

wherein the lower ends of the first and second rake handles are coupled to the upper ends of the first and second rake heads respectively; and

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wherein the upper end of one of the first and second rake handles has a connecting means for flexibly and pivotally holding and connecting to the other one of the first and second rake handles; and

wherein the connecting means allow motion of the two rake handles in a cycle from a first position to a second position and back to the first position; and

wherein the first position comprise the rake handles substantially parallel and adjacent each other, the inner sides of the rake heads next to each other, the lower ends of the rake heads aligned forming substantially one functional rake head, at least one rake head contributing to the total raking span and substantially lying on the same plane; and

wherein the motion leading to the second position comprise a first operation wherein at least one of the rake handles is separately flexed to turn about an azimuthal axis substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the rake handles, resulting in the second position wherein the rake heads are substantially facing each other; and

wherein a picking operation in the second position comprise swinging at least one of the rake handles alternately inwardly toward and outwardly away from the other rake handle; and

wherein the motion leading back to the first position comprise the reverse of the first operation;

whereby the first position is adapted for raking debris and the third position is adapted for grasping debris between the facing rake heads and for releasing the debris into a receptacle.

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Claim 82 (new): The picking rake in claim 81 wherein the connecting means comprise the following or their equivalents:

- a) a first aperture on the upper end of one of the first and second rake handles, and
- b) a second aperture on the other rake handle disposed nearest the first aperture, and
- c) a cord, chain, or equivalent flexible elongated material, and
- d) wherein the flexible elongated material is threaded through the first and second apertures and closed off at each end with a retaining knot.

Claim 83 (new): The picking rake in claim 81 wherein the connecting means comprise the following or their equivalents:

- a) a first aperture on the upper end of one of the first and second rake handles, and
- b) a second aperture on the other rake handle disposed nearest the first aperture, and

- c) a chain comprising at least two links, said chain having a first link on one end and a last link on the other end, and
- d) wherein the first link is secured to one of the first and second apertures, and
- e) wherein the last link is secured to the other of the first and second apertures.

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Claim 84 (new) The picking rake in claim 81 wherein the connecting mean comprise the following or their equivalents:

- a) a first aperture on the upper end of one of the first and second rake handles, and
- b) a first ring secured to the first aperture, and
- c) a second ring disposed and retained on a section of the other of the first and second rake handles closest the first ring, and
- d) means for turning the second ring freely around the cross-sectional perimeter of the other of the first and second rake handles, and
- e) wherein the first ring is linked to the second ring.

Claim 85 (new): The picking rake in claim 81 wherein the connecting means comprise the following or their equivalents:

- a) a first screw eye mounted on the upper end of one of the first and second rake handles, and
- b) a second screw eye mounted on the other of the first and second rake handles closest the first screw eye, and

- c) a first ring linking the first screw eye to the second screw eye.

Claim 86 (new): The picking rake in claim 81 wherein the connecting means comprise the following or their equivalents:

- a) a first aperture on one of the first and second rake handles, and
- b) a second aperture on the other of the first and second rake handles disposed closest to the first aperture, and
- c) a ring of size capable of being loosely threaded to the first and second apertures.

Claim 87 (new): The picking rake in claim 81 wherein one of the first and second the inner sides overlap the other of the first and second inner sides, whereby the other of the first and second inner sides abuts the overlapping inner side of one of the first and second rake heads.
